

MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING HELD 16TH MAY 2023

Present: Councillor Dai Morgan Mayor
Councillor Charles Dale
Councillor Sam Skyrme-Blackhall
Councillor Duncan Whitehurst
Councillor Laurence Blackhall
Councillor Emma Lewis
Councillor Laura Crockford
Councillor Joe Criddle

In attendance: Mr Andrew Davies Clerk to the Council/Financial Officer
Sharon Thompson Assistant to the Town Clerk

The Mayor welcomed councillors, thanking members once again for all their support. He said council will soon reveal plans of what we hope to achieve in next 12 months, we need a good effort to get us where we need to be.

For those wishing to speak, the Mayor asked that they please raise hands in accordance with Standing Orders and to stand when speaking. He asked new members not to be afraid to say something even if unsure, there is no right or wrong answer.

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14. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllr Rapi and Cllr Phillips.

15. TO DISCLOSE ANY PERSONAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS LISTED BELOW

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall wished to withdraw from Item 11a as she sits on the planning committee of PCNPA.

16. PUBLIC PARTICIATION: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ASK QUESTIONS AND MAKE REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED DURING TONIGHTS MEETING AND WHICH IS OPEN FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS ARE EXCLUDED

17. TO AGREE ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMITTEE MINUTES, EXCEPT THOSE MARKED PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL, BE GIVEN TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS PRESENT

Proposed Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall, seconded by Cllr Dale.

18. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 2ND MAY 2023

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 2nd May 2023 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

19. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Page 159 Item 279 - Post Office Site: The Clerk had written to Kate Attrill PCNPA who feels that the written report to committee will outline the rationale for the outcome. The Clerk now has a hard copy of the 72-page report in the office but a downloadable copy is also available to email to members.

Ms Attrill is more than happy to have a meeting but she has asked that members are aware of the content of the Report as she feels many questions may be answered from within.

Cllr Blackhall is happy to go through the Report but the question was intended that the meeting was more generic than just this one application: it was how the policies and procedures are working, how they can be adapted and changed, and intended to include other organisations.

He believes TTC should still go ahead with a joint meeting and if members are happy, he will draft a suggested letter to each of the other organisations. He will ask how we could get together in an informal way to determine how can we get better at this and make sure we get more affordable houses in future schemes like this.

Cllr Dale proposed that Cllr Blackhall composes these letters and returns to council with a briefing once done. Then we can all move forward together. Seconded by Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall.

20. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF TENBY TOWN COUNCIL HELD 10TH MAY 2023

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Tenby Town Council meeting held 10th May 2023 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

21. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION ONLY

There were no matters arising.

22. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 12TH MAY 2023

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Annual General Tenby Town Council meeting held 10th May 2023 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

23. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Cllr Dale told members that as a result conversation on the evening of Mayor Making the Deputy Town Clerk, she has agreed to be his Consort for the upcoming year. Councillors congratulated them!

24. TO DISCUSS THE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD WITH MR MARC OWEN TO DISCUSS PARKING CONCERNS IN THE TOWN

The Mayor asked members if they had all had a chance to read the notes.

The Clerk understood that a Notice of Motion had gone before PCC meeting on Thursday relating to provision of holiday permits in residents parking bays.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall told councillors that the Notice in Motion had indeed come to full council last Thursday and this matter had now been referred to Cabinet for discussion.

As a county councillor she has spoken to Marc Owen on numerous occasions and is currently awaiting further feedback. Please let me know of any thoughts or ideas members may have.

She is also currently speaking to her constituents in her south ward; specifically in areas where there are not enough bays for permit holders. There is an undercurrent caused by visitors coming and using seasonal tickets provided by the holiday property owner which needs to be readdressed.

She is pleased that Mr Owen also now believes the current system isn't working at long last.

Cllr Dale welcomed the Puffin permits which should be promoted to encourage owners of Air bnb's and holiday lets to purchase transferable car park permits for their guests rather than 'holiday' permits being issued for residents' bays.

He doesn't believe there should be any type of holiday permits issued for use in resident parking bays.

He noted that The Green car park is free in winter, adding we don't need it to be free in the middle of winter, we need it to be free in summer.

Also, he felt, we need to change the balance, the scheme currently is not designed to stop a household having a permit and a holiday maker getting a permit for the same property - that needs to go.

Cllr Dale noted that Mr Owen said he was happy to consider any ideas whereby Resident Park Permit holders could have concessionary rates in car parks. No, he continued. This should be free not concessionary. We are asking residents to pay 3 times, they pay with car tax, for a permit and then are asked to pay again in a car park. It needs to be free, this would be an acceptable way to go, a guarantee that, if you have paid for your space you can park in a car park close to where you live.

Imagine the same system as the permit scheme operating in the harbour, he ventured. You pay for a mooring but can only use it if no-one else is!

Cllr Duncan Whitehurst told members that there are many other towns in England and Wales that do allow free car parking to resident permit holders in their public car parks.

We would not be breaking ground with this, we need a sensible policy, he said.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall commented that the Puffin permits have been available for a while. It is a concessionary ticket and she has tried to encourage locals to get it as it saves a lot of money.

Regarding a zonal approach whereby permit holders could use a nearby permit area if theirs was full, this had been piloted in the past but some residents didn't even know there were zones put in place.

The pilot was discontinued after a short time as it was felt not to be working but Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall felt a longer pilot scheme, say for two years, was needed to fully assess its success or failure.

For example, in Trafalgar, Picton Road and Culver Park you are talking about just a handful of permanent residents, she continued. The rest are second homes and holiday lets. Residents find difficulty in parking because of people coming down and using the 'holiday permit' to take up a space for a week. This is becoming a major issue.

You can find all Culver Park full but Picton Road's permit spaces have hardly any cars. Personally, I think it is very unfair when speaking to colleagues at County Hall. Tenby is seen as a cash cow as usual, and I do not feel we get much back in return. Why should we as a town be paying all this money, making our residents pay to park where they live in front of their homes, it is a shambles. I feel there is little understanding of where we are as a town, how much it swells in the summer, and how few residents we have in the town, she added.

Cllr Lewis told councillors that she had lived on High Street for 15 years and there was no residents parking scheme available to people in this area. Most parked where they could or used the multi-storey car park when the charging period was until 5 pm but then they changed the charging period to end at 7pm but this really affected residents who live in town but happen to work out of town a few days a week.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall knows the ‘traffic wardens’ are doing a job, but she personally feels, when they are out in force first thing in the morning it is all about generating revenue. This is not acceptable.

She reiterated her view that Tenby seems to have to bear the brunt for many things and does not get much back in return.

I too have felt this for some time, said the Mayor. PCC do not seem to be investing the pennies back.

He revealed that he had been speaking to an elderly person who had one wheel parked on double yellow lines and got a ticket at 5.50 am in the morning. That very same day, High Street was jammed up with illegally parked cars. There were two ‘traffic wardens’ walking side by side through the town and neither bat an eyelid.

Does Mr Owen not see what is going on, he said. It cannot carry on like it is.

Cllr Blackhall suggested that all the comments made should be fed back to Mr Owen to put further pressure on trying to find a solution.

He then went on to give an example: House A has a full time resident and can apply for a permit, house B is a second home so pays double council tax and can apply for permit. House C is not permanently occupied and is not a second home but is a holiday let. It is registered for business rates so does not pay council tax. It then claims small business rate relief so does not pay anything at all or very little.

It was his view is that Houses A and B should be allowed to apply for a permit but House C should not. The rules should be changed so that permits can only be issued to those that pay council tax, it is perfectly simple. It seemed fair to him, and he just did not know why this change cannot be made.

We should specifically say we want a ban on any permits being issued to properties that do not pay council tax, he said.

Cllr Whitehurst pointed out that this is not actually unusual. There are flexible parking residents permits in Dorset, East Hampshire and Derbyshire. In Derbyshire residents parking permits were actually free.

There are town centre workers permits allowing free parking for staff in Worthing, Harrow and Loughborough while many more offer discount rates for people working in town, as well as for NHS and emergency staff. It’s not out of realms of possibility.

Cllr Crockford agreed that that, as one herself, residents who live in the town centre were poorly served as they don’t have a permit area to apply for. She sustained a back injury some time ago and could not park anywhere near her home. When PCC was asked if there was any possibility of a permit, a flat no was received.

She feels there must be a way that permits can be available to residents within the town centre, perhaps via the suggested ‘zonal’ approach. There are a few residents’ bays around the town which are never full all year round.

Second homeowners are important to the town, but I would like to ask the question: do they need a full-time space in a town when they are only here for a number of weeks of the year, she added.

Cllr Dale reiterated that the way to go forward would be for all Air bnb/holiday let owners only be allowed to apply for Puffin permits.

They need to be able to offer parking in some way in this day and age and a Puffin permit is a perfect way to do it, he said. Visitors can come to their property to drop their bags and the car park is just 5 minutes away. This is much simpler.

Cllr Lewis seconded the proposal that the comments made form the basis of a response to Mr Owen.

RESOLVED

That the points and suggestions made by members during discussion form the basis of a letter to Mr Owen, PCC.

25. TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATION AND TO AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:

- a. **NP/23/0207/FUL – Construction of new 4-bedroom dwelling with detached garage on vacant plot with principle address off private road and proposed access for additional parking off adjoining highway**

The Mayor proposed that the matter be moved to private as there is a letter marked private by an objector to consider in relation to this proposal. Cllr Blackhall seconded.

26. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:

- a. **Tenby Civic Society – Withdrawal of Public Facilities/Services in Tenby**

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall pointed out the letter was written on 2nd May and was now a little outdated.

PCC are looking at toilet provision again following a members' 'call-in' as every town in the county was set to lose a toilet facility. We cannot afford to lose ours and will continue to put pressure on PCC so this is in hand and out there in the public domain.

In relation to library services, the Clerk had had a conversation with Mike Cavanagh at PCC and our current service was safe for this year, If there is any change, they will return to us in good time for us to consider it to allow for it in our budget.

We don't want to be in a situation where PCC are drip feeding certain assets to us bit by bit, they need to come back to us with what facilities they cannot

sustain in good time for us to consider what we can and cannot support and they have committed to doing that, Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall continued.

The bin removed on Narberth Road/Glebe junction referred to is because there is a resident repeatedly dumping cat litter into the bin on a daily basis.

PCC boys work hard but they find street bins continually overfilled with domestic waste which has a knock-on effect on what they are trying to do. They have been removing bins to try and educate the public and they do intend putting them back but this is a discussion for the future.

We all know the story of the flower beds, Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall added. She felt this had been blown out of proportion. It had been agreed a long time ago and it is work in progress.

The bus service provision has already been sorted. PCC have negotiated with the operators and the 352 service, amongst others, is now safe.

In relation to the removal of benches the Clerk told members that it is simply a matter of benches being removed as they are damaged beyond repair and at the end of life. On the Esplanade, for example, the old Victorian style roll top benches were removed because they were rusted through and unsafe.

PCC are keeping vacant spots for those wishing to purchase memorial benches and it is just a matter of waiting for these to be replaced.

Cllr Dale felt slightly disappointed with this letter. He praised the Civic Society for their wonderful work but 90% of these questions could have been answered by reading the minutes of the council and the local press.

Anybody who has read either knows how furious and concerned we are about losing toilets, our library and litter bins and will know the plans for flower beds but there is a fake Facebook page which is publishing made-up stories which are stoking public concern.

He knows they are trying to be funny but the public are upset because of what they read on this fake Facebook page.

Councillors have constantly been asked questions as to the truth. Well, this is that we have been working with PCC constantly.

Sometimes, we will not always get a response, Cllr. Dale continued. There is certainly a feeling we are not getting enough bang for our buck but we will persevere.

Are consultations undertaken, ask the Civic Society, said Cllr. Dale. They are but people don't seem to bother to respond to them. We are constantly talking to PCC attempting to do the best for our town.

Please read minutes and read what goes into the Observer and you will have the genuine answer. We are working actively to do our best.

Cllr Whitehurst believes the closure of public toilets are of major concern. They are not a statutory duty so therefore, when there is money to be cut, they will always be in scope.

It is an essential service, it is a basic human right to use a public convenience, we should not have to pay for them. We all pay council tax, and this should be funding basic facilities. PCC seem to be keen on community asset transfers of these facilities, and others, but this usually means the town council has to bear the complete cost of the service.

In St Ives, Cornwall, their unitary authority has transferred the toilets to the town council to manage but they give them a full grant to do so. St Ives toilets are free all bar one.

He suggested the town council bypass PCC and write directly to Welsh Government asking them to consider making provision of public conveniences a statutory service with central funding so nobody in Wales pays to use the toilet.

They did for use of hospital car parks, he said. Wales could lead the way on this.

Cllr Lewis seconded Cllr. Whitehurst's proposal.

Having worked in community transport, when taking vulnerable folk out and about, access to toilets was an important issue, she said.

Some people cannot leave home if there is no access to public toilets. It is a well-being issue that disproportionately affects people with protected characteristics. Children and the elderly are most in need of quick access to toilets when making any form of journey plans.

This is surely a basic human right in a civilised society.

RESOLVED

That the Civic Society's comments be noted.

Further that TTC write directly to Welsh Government asking them to consider making provision of public conveniences a statutory service with central funding

27. TO CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

The Clerk explained that the Council had three standing committees with plenary powers: planning, policy and personnel. Each committee had seven members; this being the mayor and deputy and five others.

The planning committee meets once a month to make recommendations to PCNPA in our role as statutory consultees. The other committees meet quarterly.

Cllr Dale was happy to continue on the planning committee. The Clerk advised that Cllr Phillips had indicated his interest in the policy committee.

For the benefit of new members, the Clerk explained that the Policy committee covers a range of things including EPF projects, community engagement work, consultation on things such as PCNPA development plans, Welsh government consultation, business planning and town council policy development, for example we are soon to be issued with new Model Standing orders and members would have to determine which of those orders which were not statutory we would adopt.

The Personnel committee was self-explanatory dealing with staff welfare, recruitment, grievance complaints etc. Cllr Blackhall said he was happy to clerk these meetings if there were agenda items requiring the Town Clerk to withdraw from proceedings.

Cllr Blackhall suggested an additional standing committee to improve our areas of publicity and promotion and how we engage through social media and the website to get information out to residents. He suggested that it not be constituted as the other standing committees but would be a self-organising and self-managing committee. We had so many new councillors with positive ideas.

Cllr Crockford welcomed the idea feeling it was really important to get our voice heard. She would be happy to sit on this.

The Clerk advised that, if this was set up as a standing committee, meeting would need to be called formally in line with the Local Government Act 1972. Cllr Blackhall said he was happy, in that case, for this to be a working party.

Cllr Dale agreed that this should be a working group so that our Community Engagement Officer can be a member.

The Clerk added that there was a fourth standing committee to deal with Finance but this only tends to meet once a year to determine the budget.

He felt that there were, in light of potential discussed funding implications from PCC, many difficult decisions to be made in future which could not solely be dealt with one meeting a year. He wondered if a Finance sub-committee was needed to feed into the Finance committee.

Cllr Blackhall suggested Finance be combined with Policy but any financial implications discussed would result in recommendations to be ultimately determined by full council. Members agreed.

It was agreed that the membership of standing committee would be:

Planning – Cllrs Morgan, Dale, Lewis, Crockford, Criddle, Hallett and Rapi.

Policy/Finance – Cllrs Morgan, Dale, Blackhall, Whitehurst, Lewis, Crockford and Phillips.

Personnel – Cllrs Morgan, Dale, Skyrme-Blackhall, Lewis and Crockford. The remaining posts to be filled following discussion with absent members.

There were also two sub-committees reporting to Full Council; Cemetery Management and Augustus Place. These were called on an as required basis.

The Augustus Place sub-committee had not met for a number of years. Cllr Blackhall proposed that this sub-committee be disbanded with any matters relating to Augustus Place being dealt with by existing standing committees or full council. This was agreed.

The Cemetery Management sub-committee members were agreed as Cllrs Morgan, Skyrme-Blackhall, Hallett and Lewis.

Representatives on Outside Bodies was agreed, with Cllr Criddle filling the vacant post on the Harbour Users Committee.

Cllr Whitehurst noted that SPRAG was not on the list of Outside Bodies. He was happy to remain on this. He had not been aware of any recent meetings but believed things were ticking over nicely.

The Clerk pointed out that the council appointed representatives on the Tenby Charity Trustees did not have to be town councillors. The Trustees were reviewing membership at the moment and he would inform the town council if any new representatives were needed.

28. PROVISION OF A LOCAL DOG WARDEN/ENFORCEMENT OFFICER – CLLR SKYRME-BLACKHALL

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall referred to her report and the proposal.

The issues around dog wardens/enforcement officers had been considered at county level and there were a number of factors including dogs on leads (not just around coast, but in fields and on footpaths), sheep worrying and fouling.

Pembrokeshire are already putting in place enforcement officers for the season as a trial and see what happens. However, Cllr Chris Williams, from Saundersfoot and I are not happy with this little window of time that they are proposing to undertake enforcement, she continued.

This is a year-round problem, not just 6 to 8 weeks. There are people here all year round and, since lockdown, dog ownership has increased dramatically. I wonder what TTC's stance would be on employing our own dog warden/enforcement officer?

I, and Cllr Williams, feel that there is an opportunity here to work with Saundersfoot Community Council with the idea that we both put money towards it.

We could work together to explain what we want as a town/village and trial it for a year.

We can show others how it works when we work together. We don't have a presence; we have lots of signs informing people what they can and cannot do but no one to enforce it.

We are both dog friendly places but whether it is rubbish, dog fouling, dogs on beaches when they should not be or untrained dogs, no one is there doing the job of enforcement.

I believe Saundersfoot is keen to be involved, she added.

Cllr Lewis said she is a dog lover but we all suffer from not wanting to step in dog mess. It is not good for anyone.

The comment about 'Covid' dog is very pertinent, she continued. There is a lot more random behaviour which doesn't do the town any good. An enforcement presence, even if it is just providing education will help encourage responsible dog ownership.

There is a lot of money in being a dog friendly town, she continued. If we have a 'presence' to control issues people feel it is being taken seriously. Signs obviously do not work without enforcement back-up.

Cllr Whitehurst agreed Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall's proposal of shared enforcement between Tenby/Saundersfoot.

One thing to consider is that we will not get the Blue Flag back on the North Beach if there are no proper dog controls in place. If there is no dog warden enforcement it fails the Blue Flag award so this is a wise and timely thing to do.

This is not a move without precedent, he continued. Looking across the pond to Cornwall, St Ives Town Council employ their own dog wardens to supplement their county council's provision. In Cornwall, traffic enforcement offices also assist in administering fines, However, the priority is not to collect fines, the measure of success is educational, fines are used only as a last resort.

Cllr Dale agrees with Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall but felt we could go one step further.

The whole of Pembrokeshire is a massive tourist resort, he commented. However, the needs of the coastal towns are completely different to those towns more 'internal' in the county.

He suggested establishing a coastal committee bringing all coastal towns/villages in to work together. This would be a larger unit with more bargaining power to work for the good of us all.

Cllr Blackhall agrees, adding that he has long advocated for the coastal communities of the south of the county to work together. In fact, he broke with tradition by inviting Chairs of neighbouring community councils to his Mayor Making.

As our neighbours it was perfectly right to do so, he said. There are so many issues to work together on. Initially we could work with Saundersfoot and then branch out to

other areas in Pembrokeshire as we have a lot in common. We could start with a round the table discussion.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall said that Cllr Williams would be more than happy to get round the table with us. We could ask Cllr Cormack, the North Saundersfoot and Amroth county councillor too. Let's move to the next level.

The Clerk said, with reference to Cllr Whitehurst's point about St Ives, that Wales was not the same as England. Only unitary authorities, or those contracted to them, were authorised to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in relation to dog enforcement here.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall moved a proposal for the Clerk to obtain further costs and details of how a joint scheme should be managed and to bring a report to the next Council meeting.

Further that TTC look to set up a liaison group involving other coastal community councils.

Cllr Lewis seconded the motion.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk obtain further costs and details of how a joint scheme should be managed and bring a report to the next Council meeting.

Further that TTC look to set up a liaison group involving other coastal community councils.

29. TO CONSIDER ANY FINANCIAL OFFICER/CLERK'S ITEMS AND TO AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS

a. Calendar of Meetings 2023-2024

The Clerk explained that these were the dates of planned meetings. There may also be extra-ordinary or ad hoc meetings as and when needed.

b. Tenby Market

Property management at PCC had arranged a meeting to discuss Tenby market for 9am on Friday, 26th May 2023. This will be via TEAMS but it would be available for members to join in the Mayor's Parlour too.

Cllr Blackhall explained to newer members that various discussions had been had relating to the market and he would sit with the Clerk and draft a background note for them.

It was the understanding of Cllr Lewis that the free toilets in Upper Frog Street were there for the users of food outlets in Tenby Market. Are there any implications to them if these toilets close, she asked?

30. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved that the next planning meeting will take place on Tuesday, 6th June 2023 at 7pm following by a full council meeting on Tuesday, 6th June 2023 at 7.30pm.

31. TO PROPOSE ANY ITEM FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Update on Dwr Cymru – Cllr Whitehurst

32. TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM(S) OF BUSINESS UNDER THE “PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT OF 1960